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Comic book superheroes tackle race, identity

November 7, 2013

The Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art (BFSDoArt) presents *Narrowing the Margin*, the 2013 Fall Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) thesis exhibition of Julian Strayhorn II, from November 15 through December 13 in the University Gallery at Georgia Southern University's Center for Art & Theatre. The Department will host a reception on Thursday, December 5, at 5 p.m. in the Center for Art & Theatre. Visitors will have the opportunity to meet the M.F.A. candidate, as well as discuss the ideas and imagery that shaped his work.

Narrowing the Margin investigates aspects of race and identity through comic-book imagery. Often inserting African-American figures within traditional comics, Strayhorn challenges socialized concepts of black identity. By installing large-scale African-American comic characters on facades of buildings, Strayhorn poses questions to the community regarding how history informs the present commentary on what society recognizes and what it overlooks.

"Like many within the graphic-design industry, Julian has become interested in utilizing public space to present information and elicit a response," said Ed Rushton, BFSDoArt associate professor of graphic design. "This exhibition is a wonderful example of a student who is exploring all of the facets and possibilities of graphic design, from traditional print to installation and social awareness and even digital media."

Dedicated to serving the public of southeast Georgia and the University community, the BFSDoArt is geared toward an interdisciplinary interpretation of art and culture.

"The Department's Master of Fine Art graduate program is extremely diverse and offers degree specialization in two- and three-dimensional art, as well as graphic design," said Marc Moulton, the director of the Department's M.F.A. program. "Courses are specifically tailored to develop the professional practices necessary for contemporary artists. Our graduate-student body is dynamic, energetic and passionately focused on creating work that reflects its broad interests."

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